# Sample Tasks

The sample tasks that follow are examples of general education activities in the content areas of reading, math, and science at elementary, middle, and high school levels. These can be used as is or serve as models if educators develop their own. It will be important to make sure that whatever task(s) are administered to students that they:

- are directly connected to the grade level benchmark and target skill that the assessment is evidencing
- are directly connected to the grade level, general education curriculum for that particular district, school, or class
- are broken down into more steps tailored to the individual needs of each student
- are adapted to make instruction and performance accessible and meaningful for each individual student

# Elementary Language Arts Sample Task

**CCSB:** A. Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
3. Students can draw conclusions, make inferences, and deduce meaning.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____ Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
_____
Activity *(for planning purposes)* Create comic strip type story maps to examine story elements.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/ Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: As a class read "Where the Wild Things Are" or another grade level book. | | | | |
| Step 2: Students should write a short response in their writers' notebooks to the text. Ask questions to elicit conversation such as: What stood out the most for you in the story and why?, If you were the main character in the story, how would things have been different?, etc. | | | | |
| Step 3: Explain that a story map helps the reader think about the significant features of a text. It is a graphic organizer that a reader can use to explore how a story is put together. | | | | |
| Step 4: Using chart paper, overhead projector, or LCD projector, write the work "Setting" as your first heading. Explain that the setting is the time and place of the story. Ask the students to identify the setting of the book that you've read. | | | | |
| Step 5: Have the students provide | | | | |

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| supporting evidence from the book for the description they gave and write that evidence under the Settings heading. | | | | |
| Step 6: Ask what made the setting interesting (or not), and how important the setting was to the story. | | | | |
| Step 7: Repeat the process for the following elements: characters, problem, events, and solution. | | | | |
| Step 8: Use a comic strip planning sheet to have the students: name the story, give a comic subtitle (name the elements they will focus on), write authors). | | | | |
| Step 9: In each of the remaining frames of the comic strip, students should create a caption for the frame with the appropriate story element as well as the supporting details from the story. | | | | |
| Step 10: They can add backgrounds, characters, and dialogue that relate to the information represented in the frame. | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=236

# Middle School Language Arts Sample Task

**CCSB:** A. Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
4. Students can infer traits, feelings, and motives of characters.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____
Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
_____
Activity *(for planning purposes)* Create a homepage for a website that a character from a book would likely develop based on the characteristics given in the book.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: Provide some sample personal homepages for students for students to preview. Each student should make a list of elements that they found common to most homepages and make a list of elements which would be unique to them and would be found on their own homepages. | | | | |
| Step 2: Students choose a character from their novel for whom they will develop a homepage. They then will analyze the character thoroughly and list what things might this person put on his or | | | | |

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| homepage. | | | | |
| Step 3: Students will gather basic information about their characters. Encourage students to answer the questions from the perspective of their character (e.g., what is the main conflict for the character you're exploring?) | | | | |
| Step 4: Using a web-authoring or word-processing program, students create their character's homepage. It should contain a minimum of five graphic elements and three written elements. | | | | |
| Step 5: The character's homepage should also include a minimum of four pages hyperlinked to each other. | | | | |
| Step 6: Save the pages as web pages onto diskettes or if allowed, upload them to a web site. | | | | |

*Instructional activity retrieved from the web www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=50

# High School Language Arts Sample Task

**CCSB:** A. Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
9. Students can analyze style or structure.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____ Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
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Activity *(for planning purposes)* Students "become" one of the major characters in a book and describe themselves and other characters, using lists of accurate, powerful adjectives.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: Identify adjectives in a paragraph. | | | | |
| Step 2: Brainstorm a list of character traits or provide a short list on the board, to provide a sample for students. | | | | |
| Step 3: Compose a class definition of the literary term. | | | | |
| Step 4: Participate in a class demonstration of compiling a list of character traits, using a variety of resources. | | | | |
| Step 5: Compile the data for the character in a chart which includes the book which includes the character. | | | | |
| Step 6: In small groups compile a list of traits and support from the novel on a character. | | | | |

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| Step 7: On butcher paper, list the traits of the selected character without identifying the character. | | | | |
| Step 8: Post the charts and have groups guess which character the other groups' lists are describing. | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: www.readwritethink.org/lesson

# Elementary Math Sample Task

**CCSB:** D. Students can interpret data presented in a variety of ways.
1. Students can use tables and graphs to locate and read information.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____ Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
_____
Activity *(for planning purposes)* Using graphs to compare two categories of information and identify number patterns.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: Display a chart that has four sets of numbers with the first number being 13 less than the second number (e.g., 27/40). Have the first number in the pair labeled "start" and the second number labeled "finish" and ask the students, "How do you get from start to finish in each row?" | | | | |
| Step 2: Provide another set of pairs with the first number being 20 more than the second number. Ask, "How do you get from start to finish in each row?" | | | | |
| Step 3: Provide a weather chart created with various cities; one column for 6 a.m. temperature | | | | |

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| and the second column for the high of the day. Fill in the 6:00 a.m. temperature and tell the students to add 18 degrees to each 6:00 a.m. temperature to find the high. | | | | |
| Step 4: Have the students graph the cities 6:00 a.m. temperatures with blue dots and the highs with red dots. | | | | |
| Step 5: List the patterns they see. | | | | |
| Step 6: Collect the high temperatures for ten major cities from the local newspaper and figure the 6:00 a.m. temperature for those cities. | | | | |
| Step 7: List the cities in order from the lowest 6:00 a.m. temperature to the highest. | | | | |
| Step 8: Optional: use Microsoft Excel or similar spreadsheet/graphing software to create a graph of the data. | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: http://illuminations.nctm.org

# Middle School Math Sample Task

**CCSB:** A. Students can understand and apply a variety of math concepts.
3. Students can understand and apply concepts of geometry.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____ Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
_____
Activity *(for planning purposes)*Determine the areas of rectangles and squares for a variety of purposes.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: Measure and record the dimensions of squares and rectangles found within the classroom (e.g., floor tiles, windows, chalkboard) | | | | |
| Step 2: Calculate the area of each. | | | | |
| Step 3: Divide into groups of three with each being either a recorder, measurement verifier, or a reporter. | | | | |
| Step 4: Give each group 4 rectangles drawn on a grid and have them compute the area. Review the formula for rectangles: A=bxh | | | | |
| Step 5: Using rulers, the students should draw one diagonal in each of the shapes and then cut each shape along the diagonal into two parts. In their groups, have | | | | |

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| students estimate the area of each triangle formed by dividing shapes in half along the diagonal. Review methods (e.g., count the number of squares, half-squares, and partial squares that are formed when the shapes are divided; realize that each shape has an area equal to half the area of the original shape) | | | | |
| Step 6: Discuss the results with the class as a whole. | | | | |
| Step 7: Using the Internet, research the history of the Bermuda Triangle to determine its dimensions. | | | | |
| Step 8: Ask, "Is the Bermuda Triangle truly a triangle? If not, what shape is it? Why? If it's not a triangle, are you able to approximate the total area covered by the Bermuda Triangle? Do you think there is a center to the Bermuda Triangle? How would you find it? | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: http://illuminations.nctm.org

# High School Math Sample Task

**CCSB:** D. Students can interpret data presented in a variety of ways.

1. Students can make inferences based on data presented in a variety of ways.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____

Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____

_____ Tester _____

Scoring Key_____

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Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____

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Activity *(for planning purposes)*Gather data on the top 10 highest grossing movies, and make a bar graph and a pictogram.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: Students access a movie website such as http://www.movieweb.com/movie/alltime.html | | | | |
| Step 2: Gather data for the top 10 movies, have them set up a bar graph with the titles (and release years) along the horizontal axis and the receipts (in millions) along the vertical axis. (Discuss the scale that would be the best for the vertical axis=100s). | | | | |
| Step 3: Set up a pictogram with the same data. | | | | |
| Step 4: Make a line graph with the years along the horizontal and the receipts along the vertical. | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: http://score.kings.k12.ca.us./lessons/hollywood.html

# Elementary Science Sample Task

**CCSB:** A. Students can understand concepts and relationships in life science.
1. Students can understand structures of living things.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____ Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
_____
Activity *(for planning purposes)* Classifying animals using various features.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: Brainstorm ideas of ways in which objects or living organisms can be grouped (e.g., size, shape, or color) | | | | |
| Step 2: Talk about ways to group common items in their homes (e.g., clothes, food, games) | | | | |
| Step 3: In groups, work with one of the following items to practice classifying:<br>• A box of assorted buttons<br>• A box of assorted tools<br>• A box of assorted keys | | | | |
| Step 4: Each group should keep a written record of how the objects were divided and share with class. | | | | |
| Step 5: Teacher explains to the students that scientists classify animals depending on the features they share as animals. | | | | |

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| Step 6: Students will be given animal cards and asked to classify the animals according to whatever feature they choose. They need to keep written record of how the objects were divided. | | | | |
| Step 7: Students answer the following questions in class:<br>• Are there features that are shared by all of the animals? If so, what are they?<br>• What features vary from animal to animal?<br>• What features did you use to divide the animals?<br>• Are there other features you could use to place the animals into different groups? | | | | |
| Step 8: Have students regroup their animal cards. Provide these suggestions:<br>• Animals that run<br>• Animals that hop<br>• Animals that swim<br>• Animals that crawl<br>• Animals that fly | | | | |
| Step 9: Have students report on their written records. | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: www.sciencenetlinks.com/lessons

# Middle School Science Sample Task

**CCSB:** D. Students can understand concepts and relationships in physical science.
1. Students can understand and apply concepts related to mechanics, forces, and motion.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____ Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
_____
Activity *(for planning purposes)* Build a feedback-controlled systems (a water clock) and research ways to improve the system design.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: View a picture of the largest water clock in North America, on display at Children's Museum of Indianapolis. Students to jot down and describe some of the parts that make up the water clock. | | | | |
| Step 2: Read more about water clocks in *A Walk Through Time* (http://physics.nist.gov/GenInt/Time/early.html). Take a close look at the simple water clock, or clepsydras, which is described on the page. | | | | |
| Step 3: While reading, ask students to write down the answers to the following questions:<br>• What are the parts of a water clock?<br>• What is it designed to do?<br>• What advantage does it have over other devices such as sundials?<br>• What is the largest problem associated with water clocks? | | | | |

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| Step 4: Students experiment with a small hole in the bottom of a 1 liter plastic soft drink bottle, noting that the drip rate changes as the water level changes. | | | | |
| Step 5: With class divided into two groups, each group is to construct a water clock that will keep time accurately for at least 2 hours without human intervention. To do this, the drip rate from the bottle has to be constant. | | | | |
| Step 6: Each group need to design a feedback-controlled robotic system to keep the water level in the bottle constant enough to maintain a steady drip rate. Restrict students to using mechanical devices (like floats) and the source of water to a large (2 liter) reservoir of water. The robots can range from ones powered by the force of gravity to ones that incorporate electrical components like small motors. | | | | |
| Step 7: Each group will present and test the finished robot to each other and check 2 or 3 random times during a two-hour run to see whether it is keeping time within the specified +/-1% over the entire period. | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: www.sciencenetlinks.com/lessons

# High School Science Sample Task Format

**CCSB:** B. Students can understand concepts and relationships in life science.
3. Students can understand environmental interaction and adaptation.

Student Name _____ Date of Task Administration _____
Age appropriate grade level activity (specify curriculum based)_____
_____ Tester _____
Scoring Key_____
_____
Materials needed (must be age appropriate) _____
_____
Activity *(for planning purposes) Examine* the hydrologic impacts of drought.

| Steps w/in the Learning Activity | Benchmark/Target Skill | Script for Each Step | Student Performance Indicators | Student Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1: Read a story about a time in history in which people experienced a drought. | | | | |
| Step 2: Discuss these questions:<br>• How important is water to society?<br>• What are some examples of the role that droughts played in American history?<br>• Do you think drought could affect you? How would you prepare for a drought?<br>• What do people use water for (besides consumption and agriculture)?<br>Where do people get their water from and what happens when something, such as drought threatens the water supply? | | | | |
| Step 3: Have each student define a drought in their journals. | | | | |
| Step 4: Review the various ways that drought can be defined:<br><br>• Meteorological—a measure of departure of precipitation from normal. | | | | |

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| Due to climatic differences, what is considered a drought in one location may not be a drought in another location?<br>• Agricultural—refers to a situation when the amount of moisture in the soil no longer meets the needs of a particular crop.<br>• Hydrological—occurs when surface and subsurface water supplies are below normal.<br>• Socioeconomic—refers to the situation that occurs when physical water shortage begins to affect people. | | | | |
| Step 5: Create a chart that compares drought, floods, and hurricanes in the areas of frequency, warning time, and duration. | | | | |
| Step 6: Read the article, Droughts, Floods, and Sprawl – They're All Connected at http://www.state.nj.us/drbc/stormwater.htm. | | | | |
| Step 7: Have students write a short essay in which they summarize the article and relate it to what they have learned, particularly stressing the impact of human activities on droughts. | | | | |

* Instructional activities retrieved from the web: www.sciencenetlinks.com/lessons